

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUJUMBURA 0308

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TAGS: PGOV, US, XA, BY
SUBJECT: AFRICAN POLICY INITIATIVE

REF: STATE 311031

1. SUMMARY: TRADITIONAL LACK OF SUBSTANCE IN OUR RELATIONS WITH COUNTRIES CATEGORIZED REFTEL STEMS, IT SEEMS TO US, FROM FUNDAMENTAL NATURE OF OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH AFRICAN COUNTRIES. WE HAVE NEVER REALLY IDENTIFIED COMMON INTERESTS WITH THEM BEYOND THE TRANSFER OF ECONOMIC RESOURCES. IT SEEMS TO US SHORT SIGHTED TO TRY NOW TO CONVINCE AFRICANS EMPEROR LESS THAN STARK NAKED WHEN IT ABUNDANTLY EVIDENT TO ALL THAT HE IS. BEFORE WE CAN HOPE TO STRENGTHEN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THESE COUNTRIES EFFECTIVELY, WE MUST IDENTIFY COMMON INTERESTS AS A BASIS ON WHICH TO WORK. WE SUGGEST THAT THIS CAN BE DONE. END SUMMARY.

2. OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH MOST AFRICAN COUNTRIES WHETHER OR NOT LIMITED TO THOSE INDICATED REFTEL HAS BEEN LARGELY BASED ON ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. THE MAIN DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE MAJOR COUNTRIES AND THOSE UNDER DISCUSSION IS THAT IT IS MORE CLEARLY
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PAGE 02 BUJUMB 00308 150711Z

TO OUR BENEFIT TO AID THE FORMER. TO EVEN JUSTIFY OUR PRESENCE IN THE LATTER WE OFTEN HAVE TO RESORT TO CHARITY: WE A RICH COUNTRY CANNOT STAND BY AND LET POOR PEOPLE STARVE. WELL AND GOOD, BUT THIS IS NO BASIS ON WHICH TO BUILD A WORKING RELATIONSHIP. WE CANNOT HAVE IT BOTH WAYS. WE CANNOT BASE OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH A GIVEN COUNTRY ON WHAT AMOUNTS TO

CONDESCENSION ON OUR PART AND BEGGING ON THEIRS AND AT THE SAME TIME CONVINCE THEM THAT WE ARE DEALING WITH THEM AS EQUALS. APART FROM THIS FUNDAMENTAL WEAKNESS A RELATIONSHIP BASED ON ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE IS WEAK IN PRACTICAL TERMS SINCE WE SIMPLY CANNOT DELIVER.

3. FROM OUR EXPERIENCE IN BURUNDI WE BELIEVE WE SHOULD STRIVE TO DOWNGRADE THE ROLE OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE TO TECHNICAL MATTER. TO DO THIS A CLOSE WORKING RELATIONSHIP AT THE POLITICAL LEVEL WOULD HAVE TO BE DEVELOPED. IF, HOWEVER, WE TREAT COUNTRIES LIKE BELGIUM AND ICELAND AS EQUALS IN NATO THERE IS NO REASON WHY WE CANNOT DO THE SAME THING IN AFRICA.

4. THE MAIN COMMON INTEREST WE HAVE WITH ALL BLACK AFRICAN COUNTRIES WOULD SEEM TO BE TO DEVELOP AFRICAN LEADERSHIP IN MANAGING ITS OWN AFFAIRS, AND THE LEADERS OF THE COUNTRIES IN QUESTION REPRESENT IMPORTANT LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL IF THEY COULD BE GALVANIZED. IN AN EFFORT TO ACCOMPLISH THIS WE COULD BRING THEM AS FAR INTO THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS ON AFRICAN ISSUES AS POSSIBLE. WE SHOULD BRIEF GOVERNMENTS ON OUR POSITIONS AND REASONS FOR THEM INCLUDING LOW-LEVEL INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION WELL BEFORE THEY BECOME PUBLIC. WE SHOULD THEN STIMULATE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BUJUMB 00308 150711Z

A GENUINE DIALOGUE. WE DO NOT NEED CEREMONIAL GESTURES. HIGH LEVEL VISITS, IN FACT, IF NO ONE HAS ANYTHING TO SAY ONLY LEAD TO CYNICISM. DIALOGUE SHOULD BE CARRIED OUT AT WORKING AND AMBASSADORIAL LEVELS. HIGH LEVEL VISITS COULD BE ORGANIZED ONCE STATE OF RELATIONS LOGICALLY CALLED FOR THEM.

5. WE SHOULD REALIZE THAT THESE COUNTRIES' EXPOSURE TO INTERNATIONAL ISSUES OF ANY SCALE IS VIRTUALLY LIMITED TO UNGA AND VARIOUS MEETINGS SUCH AS OAU, NAM, ETC., AND EVEN IN THESE CASES PARTICIPATION IS USUALLY LIMITED TO AN UNINSTRUCTED AMBASSADOR. IF WE BELIEVE IT IN OUR INTEREST TO BRING THESE COUNTRIES INTO MANAGEMENT OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS EFFECTIVELY WE MUST INCLUDE THEM IN PROCESS CONSISTENTLY RATHER THAN JUST DROPPING NOTE VERBALE UPON THEM PRIOR TO UNGA IN HOPES THEY WILL SUPPORT OUR POSITIONS.

6. WE SHOULD ALSO REDESIGN OUR CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMS. THEY SHOULD NOT TRY TO GET INTO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. THE MONEY NOW BEING SPENT ON SUCH THINGS AS WOMEN IN THE MASS MEDIA AND ECOLOGY WISE TOURIST DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE SPENT

ON BRINGING AFRICAN COUNTRIES INTO THE MANAGEMENT PROCESS. THE
CURRENT PROGRAM ON U.S. ECONOMIC POSITIONS IS PRECISELY
WHAT WE SHOULD BE DOING MORE OF, BUT WHY NOT ADD SIMULTANEOUS
TRANSLATION. HAD THAT PROGRAM BEEN OPEN TO FRENCH SPEAKERS
BURUNDI COULD HAVE PARTICIPATED WITH SIGNIFICANT BENEFIT TO
BURUNDI'S UNDERSTANDING OF WORLD ECONOMIC ISSUES AND
AMERICAN POSITIONS.

7. IN SHORT, SENEGAL WITHOUT SENGHOR IS JUST ANOTHER
AFRICAN COUNTRY WHILE BURUNDI WITH A LEADER OF HIS
STATURE COULD BE RELATIVELY IMPORTANT IN RELATIONS
BETWEEN ZAIRE AND TANZANIA. WHAT WE COULD
PROFITABLY BE DOING IS TRYING TO DEVELOP
LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL THAT MAY WELL BE AVAILABLE IN
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PAGE 04 BUJUMB 00308 150711Z

SMALLER AFRICAN COUNTRIES.
GOOLD

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